



City of Hampton

Development Services Center  
22 Lincoln Street – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Hampton, VA 23669

**BARRIERS FOR OUTDOOR POOLS  
AND PERMANENTLY INSTALLED SPAS & HOT TUBS**  
(2009 Virginia Construction Code (USBC-Part 1) / Virginia Residential Code)

**ANY OUTDOOR STRUCTURE USED FOR SWIMMING OR RECREATIONAL BATHING,  
CONTAINING WATER MEASURING OVER 24 INCHES IN DEPTH, CONTAINING MORE THAN  
5,000 GALLONS OF WATER, OR HAVING A FOOTPRINT GREATER THAN 150 SQUARE FEET  
MUST BE PROTECTED BY A BARRIER WHICH MEETS THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:**

1. The top of the barrier must be at least 48 inches above grade, which is measured from the pool side. The maximum vertical clearance from grade to the bottom of the barrier is 2 inches. Part of or the entire barrier may be a pool structure such as walls of an above ground pool.
2. No opening shall allow a 4-inch sphere to pass through.
3. Solid barriers (e.g., masonry, stone) shall have no climbable surfaces. Barriers composed of vertical and horizontal members having a distance between the tops of the horizontal members of less than 45 inches apart (top to top), shall not have any openings exceeding 1.75 inches; and all horizontal members shall be on the pool side.
4. The maximum mesh size for a chain link fence is 2.25 inches unless the slats are secured so that no opening is more than 1.75 inches.
5. If diagonal members are used, the maximum opening size is 1.75 inches.
6. Pedestrian access gates must open away from the pool only and be self-closing and self-latching. If the release is less than 54 inches from the bottom of the gate, the release must be on the pool side, at least 3 inches below the top of the gate, and no openings greater than 0.5 inch shall be constructed within 18 inches of the release mechanism.
7. If a building wall serves as part of the barrier, at least one of the following criteria must be met:
  - Provide a powered safety cover which complies with ASTM F1346; **or**
  - Provide alarms listed per UL 2017 on all doors leading into the pool area which produces an audible warning heard throughout the house when the door (and screen, if applicable) is opened. The alarm shall activate within 7 seconds of the door opening and shall sound continuously for at least 30 seconds; automatically reset; be equipped with touchpad or switch to temporarily deactivate the alarm for a single opening (such deactivation shall continue for not more than 15 seconds, and the switch shall be mounted at least 54 inches above the door threshold); **or**
  - Other means of protection such as self closing doors with self latching devices, which are approved by the governing body shall be acceptable as long as the degree of protection afforded is not less than the two criteria listed above.
8. If the structure walls of an above-ground pool are used as a barrier, any ladders must be capable of being secured, locked, removed, or provided with barriers as outlined herein.
9. Barriers shall be located so that surrounding structures, equipment, or similar objects cannot be utilized to gain access from outside the pool area.
10. Spas and hot tubs do not require a barrier if provided with a safety cover which complies with ASTM F1346.
11. An electrical permit is required for new pool installation. Electrical requirements are contained in Chapter 42 of the Virginia Residential Code. The electrical permit must have an approved final inspection prior to requesting a final inspection on the pool permit.

NO PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A POOL, SPA, OR HOT TUB UNTIL A BARRIER PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND APPROVED. **A SEPARATE PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A POOL BARRIER.** POOL AND BARRIER PERMITS MAY BE COMBINED WHEN THE INSTALLATION IS BEING PERFORMED BY THE SAME COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL. FINAL APPROVAL WILL NOT BE GIVEN PRIOR TO THE INSTALLATION OF THE REQUIRED BARRIER.

As confirmed by my signature below, I agree to abide by all requirements set forth herein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date